

# Campus Strolls

**Walking tour of the Edmond J. Safra Campus, Givat Ram**



האוניברסיטה העברית בירושלים  
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem



קמפוס אדמונד

# The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

The cornerstones for the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel's first university, were laid in 1918. In 1925, the University was officially opened at an historic ceremony held on Mount Scopus attended by thousands. In the early 1950s – with access to Mount Scopus cut off – it was decided to build a new campus on Givat Ram, in an area intended for the capital city's governmental, cultural and educational center.

Today the Hebrew University is an internationally renowned multidisciplinary institution of higher learning and research, with ties extending to and from scientific and academic communities in Israel and abroad. About one-third of all competitive research grants in Israel are awarded to its scholars. The quest for excellence characterizes the thousands of students at the Hebrew University, where an emphasis is placed on research and postgraduate studies. Special programs and academic conferences attract students and scholars from all over the world. The Hebrew University awards more doctoral degrees than any other Israeli university and its graduates hold key positions in every area of Israeli society.

The Hebrew University strives to benefit society through the dissemination of knowledge, the advancement of its young people, and active participation in fields such as law, social welfare and health. The Hebrew University's mission includes training Israel's public, scientific, educational and professional leadership; preserving and researching the Jewish cultural, spiritual and intellectual heritage; and expanding the boundaries of knowledge for the benefit of humanity.

# CAMPUS SIGHTS

## Walking tour of the Edmond J. Safra Campus

Welcome to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem's Edmond J. Safra Campus on Givat Ram. The Campus houses the Faculty of Science, which is a hub for some of the most advanced scientific research taking place in Israel and the world, and where students in the experimental and exact sciences earn undergraduate, master's and doctoral degrees. The Campus is home to the Rachel and Selim Benin School of Engineering and Computer Science; the Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences; the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies; the Authority for Research and Development; the Authority for Community and Youth; the Magnes Press; the Yissum Technology Transfer Company; and the National Library of Israel. The Campus's broad, open expanses include numerous examples of unique architecture, landscaping and major works of art.

*This guide includes a detailed map and a description of nine selected points of interest on a cross-campus route. You can visit these points – which are numbered on the map – in any order; you might also want to visit the nine other spots recommended at the end. Our route begins at the main pedestrian entrance to the Campus.*

- 🦽 The route is relatively flat, easy to walk, and mostly wheelchair accessible, although we recommend that those in wheelchairs be accompanied.
- 🗑️ Please help keep the Campus neat and clean.
- 🚫 No campfires or picnics are allowed on the Campus.

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## Campus Entrance & Chaim Weizmann Square

**A**t the main bus stop by the entrance to the Campus, notice the large stone relief by well-known Israeli sculptor Itzhak Danziger. The relief, at the far end of the covered bus stop, contains motifs from the archaeology of the Land of Israel. Entering the Campus gates, to the right, is the tallest building on the Campus, the Sherman Building for Research Administration, which bears the Hebrew University symbol: the Hebrew letters **alef** and **ayin** (the initials of the University's name in Hebrew) intertwined to form a torch. Atop the building fly the flags of the State of Israel and of the Hebrew University. The building was designed by architects Dov Carmi, Zvi Melzer and Ram Carmi in the Bauhaus-inspired "International Style" of the 1950s. Prominent in the small garden between the entrance gate and the Sherman Building are three cedars, the largest of which is a Cedar of Lebanon, mentioned in the Bible because its wood was used to build the Temple. The cedars, planted when the new campus was built in the 1950s, symbolize the University's mission to serve as a temple of secular and pluralistic education. For your convenience, the University's Nature Park and Galleries has placed signs with botanical and other information alongside many of the trees on the Safra Campus. On approximately 12 trees, the first of which is the Cedar of Lebanon at the entrance to the Campus, there will be an RC code (for visitors with smartphones) with detailed botanical information.

The large plaza at the entrance to the Campus is named after one of the Hebrew University's earliest advocates and founders, Chaim Weizmann, who became the first president of the State of Israel. The plaza's clean design is broken by an ornamental pool with water fountains and, at its center, American sculptor George W. Rickey's kinetic "Two Lines Oblique."

*Use the broad stairs to the right side of the pool to reach the Campus's central lawn.*

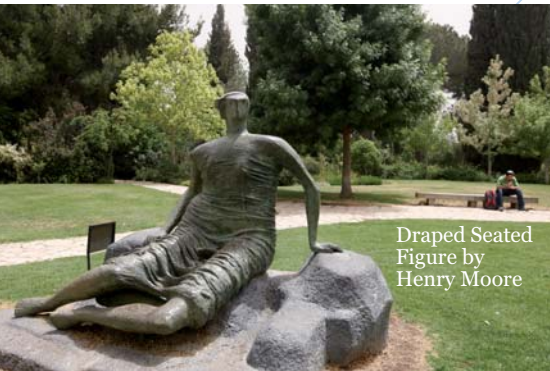


# Main Lawn & Heart of the Campus

**T**he very heart of the Campus, its “green lung,” is an expansive stretch of grass, trees, shrubs, plantings and benches. Along its western side is an avenue of buildings – starting at the Sherman Building and ending at the National Library of Israel. The buildings along the avenue, joined by an external portico, are prime examples of the 1950s “International Style” of architecture: low, rectangular and unobtrusive, very functional and featuring straight lines. One of these buildings houses the Albert Einstein Archives, comprising over 50,000 original scientific and non-scientific manuscripts bequeathed to the Hebrew University by the renowned scientist, who was among its founders. The archives, which are accessible on-line, are open to scholars and research students. The avenue’s architectural style suited the spirit of social egalitarianism that characterized Israel at the time – no building along the row dominates any other, and all are integrated into a functional whole. The Campus’s designers were also inspired by the concept of garden suburbs; thus, behind and between the individual structures, they made room for flowered areas and gardens, trees, bushes, small pools, winding pathways, features that evoke tranquility. The design of the open areas is enhanced by outdoor artwork. For instance, on the lawn not far from the main stairway is a large bronze statue, “Draped Seated Figure”, by British sculptor Henry Moore, which was donated by Charlotte Bergman

in memory of her husband, Louis Bergman. Further along, to the left and just past the midpoint of the lawn, is Yigal Tumarkin’s “Reflecting Wall no. 5,” a gift of the J. Allen Schur Foundation.

*Take the winding pathway along the eastern (left-hand) side of the lawn until you reach the Walton Avenue Foundation Bird Trail and the four bird displays along it.*



Draped Seated  
Figure by  
Henry Moore

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## Bird's-eye View

**T**he Nature Park and Galleries open-campus museum has placed four displays along the Bird Trail. These bronze, life-like models of birds represent the most common avian residents as well as autumn and spring visitors to the Campus. More than 500 million birds migrate over Israel twice a year, flying between Euro-Asia and Africa. From the Bird Trail you can just make out artist Jean David's ceramic wall, a gift of Dr. Leonard Schnitzer and Henry and Helen Mittleman in memory of Babette Schnitzer, which adorns the front of the Joseph and Ida Berman Family Building and artist Gdula Ogen's ceramic relief "Kibbutz Galuyot – the Yemenite Aliyah", on the front of the Jacob Levy Building.

*Continue west along the pathway up to the sequoia tree slice.*



# Largest Tree Section in Israel

**N**ot far from the southern edge of the lawn, near the National Library of Israel Plaza, is the country's largest section of a tree trunk. It comes from one of the widest tree types in the world, the giant sequoia. The massive trunks of giant sequoias, which are native to the northern Pacific coastal area of the United States, can reach a diameter of 11 meters. This slice was brought to the Campus from California by the Nature Park and Galleries after the tree fell in a storm. By counting the annual rings in the tree trunk we can see that it is about 2,000 years old – this sequoia began its life in California when the Romans ruled our part of the Mediterranean.

Behind the tree section you will see a coast redwood, the sequoia species that includes the tallest trees in the world, the tallest of which today reaches 110 meters. This on-campus coast redwood, the oldest of its species in Israel, has been growing steadily for slightly over half a century.

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*Continue through the paved plaza and, at the southern edge of the lawn, you will reach the National Library of Israel.*



# The National Library of Israel

The Edmond J. Safra Campus is also home to the national library of the Jewish people.

Located in the Lady Davis Building, which marks the end of the avenue of buildings along the western side of the lawn, the National Library of Israel was formerly called the Jewish National and University Library. Established in 1892, it belonged to the Zionist Federation until 1925, when ownership passed to the newly opened Hebrew University on Mount Scopus. During the War of Independence it moved to Terra Sancta and other buildings in western Jerusalem until it was installed in its present site on Givat Ram in 1960. In 2007 the Knesset passed the National Library Law, which changed its status and made it an independent company for the public good.

The present library building is a major example of Israeli architecture at its best. Its design, which has been said to show the influence of Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier and his Villa Savoye, was overseen by architects Amnon Alexandroni, Avraham Yaski, Ziva Armoni, Hanan Hebron, Michael Nadler, Shulamit Nadler and Shimon Powsner. The main entry plaza contains an ornamental pool with sculptures by artist Kosso Eloul.

On entering the library, the Berman Hall Gallery shows temporary exhibits and exhibitions from the library's holdings. Go up one flight, by stairs or elevator, to the Abraham and Vita Weintraub Hall; between the reading rooms is the monumental stained-glass triptych, "Isaiah's Vision of Eternal Peace", by renowned Israeli artist Mordecai Ardon, a gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ephraim Ilin. Its panels are dedicated to the prophet's vision of the end of days and wish for universal peace.

The National Library holds more than 5,000,000 books, newspapers and periodicals, audio cassettes, video cassettes, and CDs on Jewish heritage and culture. In addition, it has some 5,000 ancient Jewish manuscripts, incunabula (extant copies of books produced before 1501, in the earliest stages of printing from movable type), and tens of thousands of photographs

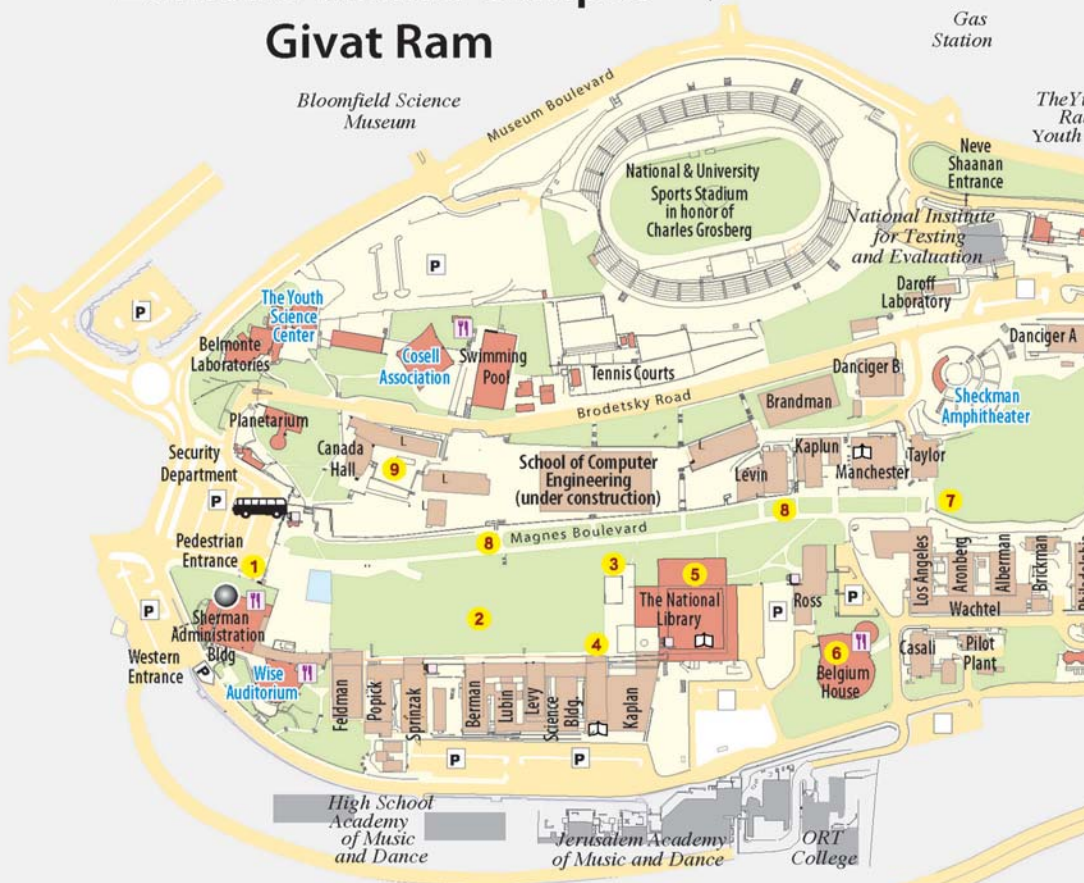
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of manuscripts. Its holdings include unique collections of maps, Jewish marriage contracts (*ketubot*), documents, periodicals, proclamations, and hundreds of archives of well-known persons and important organizations, including collections loaned by the Hebrew University. The library is also home to The Bella and Harry Wexner Libraries of Sound and Song, which is devoted to safeguarding and researching the Jewish musical heritage.

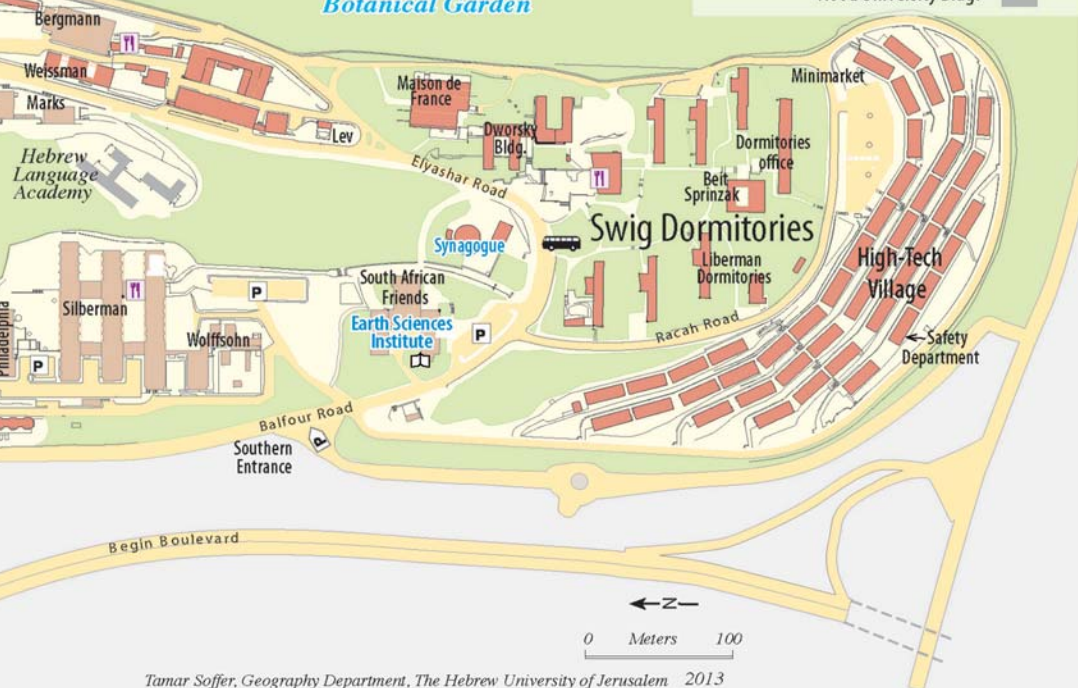
*Leave the library, turn right and go down the covered pathway beside the library building. Continue along the path and, after the James Ross Science Research Building, turn right into the car park. Facing you on the right is the Belgium House Faculty Club and Guesthouse.*

# The Hebrew University of Jerusalem Edmond J. Safra Campus Givat Ram



itzhak  
bin  
Hostel

## The Jerusalem & University Botanical Garden





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## Belgium House Faculty Club & Guest House

**A**rchitect Zeev Rabina designed Belgium House (*Beit Belgia*) in the form of two overlapping circles. At the center of the larger circle is an interior courtyard and well-kept garden highlighted by a stately *Paulownia tomentosa* tree, also known as the Empress Tree, as its focus. In addition to facilities for lectures, conferences and events, Belgium House includes a coffee shop, restaurant and guest house for University faculty and visitors. It also serves as a venue for occasional art exhibits and for events.

*As you leave, turn left, return to the central Magnes Boulevard and turn right until you reach the end of the avenue. Wooden benches mark the beginning of The Gleich Family Nature Walk.*

# Stroll in the Grove

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The wooden boardwalk, an initiative of the Nature Park and Galleries, passes through a stand of pines in the open section of the Campus and leads you along a charming nature trail with a wealth of plant life in a delightful setting. In these tranquil surroundings, among the more than 300 different species of native plants that thrive here, it's easy to forget that you're actually in the center of a dynamic city and the heart of a bustling campus. Apart from the tall trees that were planted in the grove, mostly in the 1950s, a diversity of uncultivated plant life flourishes.

*The Gleich Family Walkway is circular, so you will end up back at the beginning. Return to Magnes Boulevard and head north, back toward the Campus's main entrance.*



# Along Magnes Boulevard

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**T**ake your time as you stroll along the Boulevard back toward the Campus's main entrance. The Boulevard is named for Judah Leib Magnes, a founder of the Hebrew University and its first president. The stroll might bring to mind another figure associated with learning, the Greek philosopher Plato, who founded what was perhaps the world's first learning academy. Plato taught in an olive grove near Athens where, tradition held, the mythological Attic hero Akademos, from whose name the term "academy" derives, is buried. Plato is said to have taught his pupils as they walked from one shady olive tree to the next. The row of white poplar trees bordering one side of Magnes Boulevard may bring this ancient grove to mind.

The magnificent, sumptuous planted garden that begins alongside the James Ross Building and extends all along the western side of Magnes Boulevard was designed in the traditional English border style. You will see Chaim Gross's wooden sculpture, "The Birds of Freedom," on the lawn as you near the end of the garden.

At the end of Magnes Boulevard, on the path leading to the right (near the kiosk), is the Memorial Plaza for Hebrew University students, teachers and staff members who fell in Israel's wars or acts of terrorism. The site was designed by architect Zeev Rabina.

*Continue down the adjacent stairs and turn right toward Canada Hall. To the right of the building is a delightful pool covered in water lilies and other aquatic plants, signaling your arrival at the "Plant Evolution Garden."*









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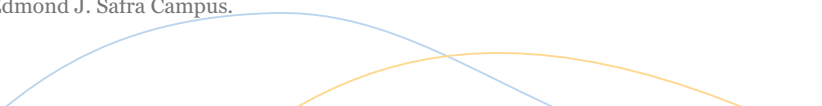
## Plant Evolution Garden

Beyond the pool, turn right, and then walk into the unique Plant Evolution Garden, another initiative of the Nature Park and Galleries Museum. Here some 500 million years of plant history is laid out. The pool symbolizes the source of all life – water – with the garden itself divided into five parts, each of which represents a stage encompassing a series of evolutionary developments in plant life, from the earliest and simplest plant forms to the present diversity, including extreme environments.

*The walking tour ends here. There is much more to see on the Campus, so continue to wander the open areas and enjoy the architecture, the plants and the very special atmosphere.*

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A hardbound guidebook to the trees on the Campus, ***Fifty Tree Tales***, by Michael Avishai and Jeff Camhi, is on sale at the Academon Bookshop in the Sherman Building for Research Administration near the main entrance to the Edmond J. Safra Campus.



# Architecture

The Edmond J. Safra Campus is an open museum of architecture featuring most of the building styles that have characterized Israel, and particularly Jerusalem, from the early 1950s up to the present. The International Style is well represented on the Campus, drawing some of its inspiration from Swiss-French architect Le Corbusier. It is most striking in the avenue of buildings leading from the Sherman Building for Research Administration alongside the entrance and up to the National Library of Israel: rectangular, straight-angled structures with large entry plazas and pillars, a row of windows, and other typical features. Other architectural styles are also represented. The Campus's overall planning was supervised by a team of architects that included **Richard Kaufmann, Joseph Klarwein and Heinz Rau**, and it brought together urban planners, architects, landscape architects, interior designers, construction engineers, supervision engineers, and advisors from a variety of fields. Many of them were pioneers of modern architecture in Israel, such as **Amnon Alexandroni, Benjamin Idelson, David Anatol Brutzkus, Dov Carmi, Al Mansfeld, Yohanan Ratner, Zeev Rechter, and Arie Shanon**.

The development of an aesthetic setting for the Campus was greatly influenced by the garden suburbs of England. This is evident in the eye-catching presence of many paved plazas and ornamental pools, expansive lawns, shady avenues, rockeries, supporting walls, groves and outdoor sculpture, interior courtyards, and sunken terraces.



The Rabbi Dr. Israel Goldstein Synagogue (architects Heinz Rau and David Resnick, 1957)

# Art

Both the open areas of the Campus and its buildings incorporate numerous works of art, most of them by Israelis and some by renowned artists from elsewhere in the world. They include a variety of artistic styles and media and contribute to the aesthetic uniqueness of the Campus. The nine points of interest along the Campus trail highlight some these works, which include the stone relief by **Itzhak Danziger** by the bus stop near the Campus's main entrance, sculptures by **Henry Moore**, **George Rickey**, **Yigal Tumarkin**, **Kosso Eloul**, **Paul Sisko**, **Israel Hadany**, **Chaim Gross** and **Moshe Ziffer**, ceramic walls by **Jean David** and **Aharon Kahana**, a ceramic relief by **Gdula Ogen**, a mosaic by **Chava Avi-Yonah**, a wall mural by **Yohanan Simon**, and more.

In the vestibule between the main reading rooms of the National Library of Israel is Mordecai Ardon's monumental stained-glass triptych, "Isaiah's Vision of Eternal Peace."



Birds of Freedom by Chaim Gross



Reflecting Wall no. 5 by Yigal Tumarkin

## Other recommended sites

- **Israel's National Collections of Natural History, Berman Building:** These comprise over 5,000,000 plant and animal specimens that together serve as an archive of Israel's natural heritage. The collections form the substrate for advanced research in ecology, evolution and systematics.
- **The Howard & Mary Edith Cosell Association for Physical Education, Leisure & Health Promotion, Established by Prof. Hillel Ruskin:** The recently renovated complex includes a fitness center, swimming pool, tennis club, athletics stadium, spa, squash halls, basketball court, and the adjacent "Ha-Ivrit" Restaurant.
- **Authority for Community and Youth:** Joseph Meyerhoff Center for Advanced Studies, Belmonte Science Laboratories, Beit Bretter for Science, Center for Partnership and Outreach.
- **Stone and Fossil Collection** in the Fredy and Nadine Herrmann Institute of Earth Sciences.
- **The Rabbi Dr. Israel Goldstein Synagogue:** Built in 1957, the synagogue complex, one of the most important milestones in Israeli architecture since the founding of the State, was designed by architects Heinz Rau and David Resnick. It includes a domed prayer hall made of white concrete, a more conventional stone structure housing the synagogue library, and an open plaza for events and ceremonies.
- **The Mona Bronfman Sheckman Amphitheater,** designed by architect Shmuel Mestechkin. At the entrance to the amphitheater is artist Moshe Ziffer's "Three Beliefs."
- **The George and Florence Wise Auditorium,** constructed in the mid-1950s, was designed by Dov Carmi, Zvi Meltzer and Ram Carmi. It serves as a venue for lectures, concerts and other events for the University and for the public-at-large; it also houses a cafeteria.
- **The Jerusalem Botanical Gardens:** Paid entry to the botanical gardens is from Burla Street.

# History

The battles of Israel's 1948 War of Independence forced the Hebrew University to leave Mount Scopus and scatter its various academic units over more than 50 temporary sites in the western part of the city. In the early 1950s it was decided to build a new campus on Givat Ram, in an area intended for the capital city's governmental, cultural and educational center. The groundbreaking ceremony was held in 1954, and in April 1958 the "first generation" of buildings was dedicated. These included the Sherman Building for Research Administration, the natural science laboratories, the Kaplan Building (today the Harman Science Library), the Los Angeles Chemistry Building, the Williams Planetarium, Canada Hall, and student dormitories to the south of the Campus. A "second generation" of buildings was constructed between 1958 and the reunification of Jerusalem in 1967. Prominent among them are the National Library of Israel, the Rabbi Dr. Israel Goldstein Synagogue, and the Feldman Building, which houses the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies. The buildings of the "third generation" were built beginning in 1967; these include the complex of buildings that comprise the Alexander Silberman Institute of Life Sciences, French House (Maison de France), the Belmonte Science Laboratories Center, and the Joseph Meyerhoff Center for Advanced Studies.

Construction on the Campus continues: the new premises of the Rachel and Selim Benin School of Engineering and Computer Sciences are nearing completion, and the new building for the Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences is being designed by leading British architect Norman Foster.



Stone-Cutter, Givat Ram (1954)

# Facts & Figures about Hebrew University

**Campuses:** Mount Scopus, Edmond J. Safra (Givat Ram), Ein Kerem, Rehovot, Beit Dagan

**Faculties:** Humanities; Social Sciences; Law; Science; Medicine; Dental Medicine; Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment

**Staff:** Approximately 950 senior faculty members

**Students:** 23,000

**Degrees awarded to date:** Over 120,000

**Research:** 2,700 projects in progress in University departments and some 90 subject-related and interdisciplinary research centers

**Recognition:** University faculty and alumni have been awarded 8 Nobel Prizes, 1 Fields Medal for Mathematics, 269 Israel Prizes, 9 Wolf Prizes, 33 EMET Prizes

**Early advocates and founders** of the University include Chaim Weizmann, Albert Einstein, Martin Buber, Chaim Nahman Bialik

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